

several Negro bands which still hold funeral parades (there were 20 in August, a good hot month for funerals), but there is a tendency for young Negroes to view the dancing and wriggling, the minstrel costumes and the satin sashes and flowered umbrellas, as pandering to a demeaning stereotype. Within the Negro areas, it has a certain ghetto nostalgia—like anti-Semitic jokes told at Jewish weddings. But when whites come to gawk it can cause embarrassment.

During Mardi Gras, the Zulus—a Negro club whose members are “gods of fun and toleration”—dress up in costume and minstrel blackface and parade through the streets, only partially in self-parody. (Armstrong himself was once King of Zulu.) “The Indians,” clubs of Negro boys, run through town whooping and singing. It is all quite ceremonial and there are not many such

expressive folk ceremonies left in America. New Orleans jazz, after all, is a rare example of mass folk art. That does not stop many Negroes, and a few sympathetic whites, from feeling uneasy when they see it as a patronized “performance” for white Louisianians.

Louis Armstrong’s brief stop here reminded a lot of people how impure even the purest folk art can be, how much the social setting colors the art. As for Satchmo himself, he seems untouched by all the doubts around him. He is a New Orleans trumpet player who loves to entertain. He is not very serious about art or politics, or even life. He was overjoyed when he was presented with a loving gift from his appreciative old friends: a cemetery plot—so he can come home again sometime for good.

ANDREW KOPKIND

Japan—The Two Reischauers

Tokyo

Japan’s fourth estate, sometimes hailed as one of the “freest” in the world, suddenly finds itself flagellated, not so much by its own government as by the US State Department. A few days ago, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, William Bundy, charged that Japan “gravely underestimates the threat that Chinese Communist domination of South and Southeast Asia would present to Japan’s own interests,” and that “large segments of Japanese opinion seriously misunderstand the situation in Vietnam and Communist China.” An earlier rap on the knuckles came from America’s Ambassador to Tokyo, Dr. Edwin O. Reischauer, who only a few months back was stoutly defending the Japanese press against his Department’s charges of “Communist infiltration.”

Expectedly, the prime cause of the friction is the antipathy felt toward the war in Vietnam by 75 percent of the Japanese public, according to a recent opinion poll by the *Asahi*, the nation’s largest newspaper. (Some members of Premier Eisaku Sato’s own pro-American ruling party say as much as “90 percent” of the Japanese people disapprove of Washington’s Vietnam policy, and, consequently, of Sato’s support of it.)

Reischauer, born in Japan and former professor of Oriental history at Harvard, is understandably sensitive to what Japanese think and say about him and the country he represents. Recently he told newsmen that “Japan is *the* most important country in Asia.” And in the US he said that Japan is “perhaps more important to us than any one of our European friends. . . .”

When, earlier this year, Undersecretary of State George Ball and Assistant Secretary of State Douglas MacArthur II charged that the *Asahi* and *Mainichi*, two of Japan’s largest and most highly respected papers, were dominated by Communists, Reischauer issued an immediate refutation. He termed the charges “untrue.” “We welcome the candid appraisal of our policies by the great independent media of other free nations. The Japanese press is no exception,” Reischauer said in a statement, adding: “Even when it disagrees with or criticizes United States policy, we admire its professionalism and enterprise, welcome its independence and forthrightness and respect its political integrity.”

The influential *Mainichi*, indignantly calling the charges a “grave insult to the Japanese people,” said: “It must be regarded as regrettable that American policy makers, with such meager knowledge of Japan, are allowed to continue in making Asian policy.”

Nevertheless, official American and Japanese displeasure with Japanese press reports of the Vietnam war was increased as 1965 wore on. Japanese newsmen who filed eyewitness stories on the Viet Cong were especially vulnerable to criticism. One after another they travelled to Viet Cong areas and a few actually were held captive for several months. Later, their reports were filled with graphic descriptions, and not a few tended to create sympathy for the Viet Cong.

Reischauer, who had been denied the platforms of several Japanese universities because of their opposition to the Vietnam war, left for home in midsummer and

delivered numerous speeches to American audiences. In Boston he said the Japanese public "has been a great deal more critical [of the US role in Vietnam] than the government." The Tokyo government, he said, "was perhaps better informed – and that is why it is more understanding than the public." (Foreign Minister Etsusaburo Shiina admitted earlier this year that much of the Japanese government's information about the Vietnam war was derived directly from American sources in Saigon and Tokyo. Subsequently, he sent veteran diplomat Shunichi Matsumoto to Saigon on a "fact-finding" mission, but his findings – to a large extent – corroborated what was being reported in the Japanese press. The Foreign Minister later told newsmen he would caution Matsumoto to be "more discreet" in his public comments which "give the impression he is criticizing our government's policy on Vietnam.")

Reischauer was still in the US when Guam-based B-52's flew to Okinawa and thence directly on a bombing mission over South Vietnam. In a Boston speech he said: "Many Japanese feel that US bases in Japan and Okinawa are more a threat to their security than an insurance policy against aggression." The Japanese, he declared, were "concerned about the US using bases in Okinawa as a jumping-off place for attacks on North Vietnam. They fear any escalation in that war might involve them."

Most Japanese applauded the Ambassador's remarks, particularly when Reischauer stated that such acts as the B-52 raid from Okinawa were "causing America's reputation in Japan to decline." The nationally-circulated *Yomiuri*, the third of the "Big Three" newspapers in Japan, referred to Reischauer as "pro-Japanese." The *Mainichi* even said that the Reischauer statements "were what we wanted the Japanese Ambassador in Washington to say."

Not surprisingly, many Japanese interpreted the remarks that Reischauer made in America as indicating some dissatisfaction with his government's Vietnam policies, particularly as they affected US-Japan relations. But upon his return to Tokyo, Reischauer said he "fully" supported US policy.

The next major US collision with the Japanese press was caused by Japanese news reports from Hanoi which suggested that America was guilty of repeatedly bombing civilian targets, including a North Vietnamese leper hospital and houses of worship. Reischauer excoriated these reports, saying: "Poor newsmen cannot tell the difference between propaganda and truth." The newsmen in question were the "foreign editors" of the *Asahi* and *Mainichi*, both of them veteran reporters.

Reischauer's sharpest barb was aimed at the reports of the *Mainichi's* foreign editor, Minoru Omori, who has served many years as a correspondent in New York and Washington. Omori and his counterpart from the *Asahi* visited Hanoi and were shown a film of an

alleged US air attack on the 2,300-patient Kin Lap Leprosarium. Omori reported that US warplanes had bombed the 160-building complex for 10 days between July 12 and 22, that the buildings bore Red Cross markings on their roofs, that they were destroyed by low-flying American planes, that "churches and Buddhist temples" also were bombed. He said the film was authentic and that when he saw such scenes as "a patient with both legs torn off from the knees, being carried to an air-raid shelter but thrown to the ground by an explosion," it had the effect of "making us, people from a third nation, bury our heads in our hands."

In an official reply, Reischauer called the Omori report "utterly false." A statement released by the US Embassy denied that American planes had "deliberately" bombed the leprosarium. "This canard has been played as a propaganda gambit previously by the North Vietnamese regime," it said.

Reischauer, in a press conference at Osaka on Oct. 5, called the Japanese press "biased" in its reports about Vietnam. He told newsmen that since he assumed his Tokyo post four-and-a-half years ago, he had taken a *teishisei*, or "low posture," in his attitudes toward the Japanese, "But now is not the time for beating around the bush. We must be frank and ready to point out the other's wrongs." At the same time, he lamented the fact that "there is so little understanding of US policy in Vietnam by the Japanese public." On the other hand, a column in *The Japan Times* of Oct. 28 said that "many" Japanese journalists and intellectuals complain that "even Reischauer, after all, can't understand Asia and Asians." Such criticism of Reischauer, who is perhaps America's foremost expert on Japan, accords with similar criticism of Americans in general made recently by ex-Premier Shigeru Yoshida, Japan's "elder statesman." In a magazine interview, Yoshida, who is considered a warm friend of the United States, said: "I have told Americans many times over that they do not understand the Orient. I believe this applies in Vietnam as well."

Meanwhile, there appears to be a hardening of Japanese opinion concerning the US Ambassador. Some Japanese have noted a deep cleavage between "Reischauer the professor" and "Reischauer the diplomat." For instance, they recall that on May 14, in Miyazaki, near Tokyo, the Ambassador asserted: "If I were now a professor at Harvard, I might assume a critical view of America's Vietnam policy." Earlier, he told an audience in Detroit on Jan. 28 that the United States "should expect Japan to insist on an independent foreign policy."

Of late, the phrase "the two Reischauers" is heard.

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